

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 TUNIS 03980 100916Z

14

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 EUR-25 PM-07 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

RSC-01 M-03 L-03 MC-02 ACDA-19 AID-20 IGA-02 TRSE-00

SS-15 NSC-10 OMB-01 RSR-01 /138 W

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P 100735Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WUDHDC PRIORITY 2497

SECDEF ISA/BSAA PRIORITY

INFO CNO PRIORITY

USCINCEUR/ECJG-PA/VAIHINGEN GERMANY PRIORITY

S E C R E T TUNIS 3980

E.O. 11652; GDS

TAGS: MASS, TS

SUBJECT: TUNISIAN REQUEST FOR USG MILITARY ASSISTANCE

REF: A. TUNIS 0867

B. STATE 066167

C. STWTE 131289

D. TUNIS 3743

1. SUMMARY: IN MEETING WITH MOD FARHAT ON JULY 6, CHARGE PRESENTED U.S. RESPONSE TO TUNISIAN REQUEST FOR MILITARY ASSISTANCE PER REFTELS (B), (C) AND (D). FARHAT EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR CONTINUED U.S. INTEREST IN TUNISIAN SECURITY. HE SAID GOT PLANS INCREASE IN DEFENSE BUDGET TO 10 PERCENT OF NATIONAL BUDGET. HE INDICATED AN INTEREST IN FURTHER DISCUSSION OF A-4 AIRCRAFT AND IN PURSUING SHIP OFFER WITHOUT MAKING FIRM COMMITMENT.

2. ON JULY 6 I MET WITH MINISTER OF DEFENSE ABDULLAH FARHAT TO PRESENT OUR RESPONSE TO GOT REQUEST FOR ARMS ASSISTANCE (REFTEL A). I WAS ACCOMPANIED BY COL. BUTLER CHUSLOT AND LTC WOODBURY DEPUISLOT. RACHID KAROUI, CHEF DE CABINET, AND LTC BOUBAKER BALMA, TUNISIAN ARMY, NEWLY
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SECRET

PAGE 02 TUNIS 03980 100916Z

APPOINTED MILITARY COUNSELOR TO THE MINISTER, ALSO PRESENT.

3. DRAWING ON REFTELS (B), (C) AND (D) I OUTLINED HISTORY OF U.S. SECURITY ASSISTANCE EMPHASIZING IT POINTED UP USG INTEREST IN TUNISIAN SECURITY AND ITS SUPPLEMENTARY ROLE TO THAT OF USG ECONOMIC AID. I THEN EXPLAINED GRANT AID WOULD PHASE OUT IN "NEAR FUTURE" BUT WOULD HOPEFULLY BE REPLACED BY A PROPORTIONAL AMOUNT OF FMS CREDIT. I STRESSED THAT U.S. COULD MAKE NO LONG TERM COMMITMENT DUE TO ONE YEAR LEGISLATIVE APPROPRIATIONS. SUBJECT TO THE ABOVE QUALIFICATIONS I ESTIMATED OUR ASSISTANCE COULD RUN TO 4-5 MILLION IN CREDITS ANNUALLY WHICH WOULD NOT MEET THE TOTAL ARMS REQUEST BUT WOULD PROVIDE SUBSTANTIAL ASSISTANCE. I THEN STATED THAT 2.5 MILLION IN GRANT AID PLUS AN EQUAL AMOUNT IN FMS FOR FY 74 HAD BEEN REQUESTED FROM CONGRESS.

4. DRAWING DIRECTLY IN REFTEL (C) I EXPLAINED OUR POSITION ON THE A-4B/C OMITTING ANY REFERENCE TO TIMING OF PURCHASE. CNO OFFER OF DER WAS THEN PRESENTED. I UNDERLINED THAT DER, IF APPROVED, WOULD BE A ONE TIME TRANSACTION WITHOUT COMMITMENT FOR FURTHER FOLLOW-ON NAVAL ASSISTANCE.

5. I CONCLUDED BY NOTING WITH REGRET THAT ASSISTANCE WOULD NOT FULLY MEET TUNISIAN REQUESTS BUT DID POINT UP MAJOR EFFORT MADE BY WASHINGTON TO BE RESPONSIVE. WE WERE ENCOURAGED BY SUSTAINED GROWTH OF TUNISIAN ECONOMY AND THOUGHT IT NATURAL THAT MOD SHOULD RECEIVE A SHARE OF INCREASED GOT RESOURCES.

6. AFTER LISTENING WITHOUT COMMENT TO FULL PRESENTATION, MOD FARHAT REPLIED THAT HE APPRECIATED THE STRONG EMBASSY/ WASHINGTON CONSIDERATION GIVEN GOT REQUESTS. HE WENT ON TO STATE THAT GOT CONSIDERED ITSELF A MEMBER OF THE FREE WORLD AND AS SUCH HOPED THAT THE TUNISIAN MILITARY WOULD BE CONSIDERED AS FREE WORLD ARMED FORCES. HE UNDERSTANDS OUR LEGISLATIVE RESTRICTIONS BUT DID ASK IF PRESIDENT NIXON COULD NOT ACT INDEPENDENTLY OF CONGRESS IF HE SAW FIT. (THIS IMPRESSION WAS QUICKLY DISCOURAGED AND INCREASING RESTRICTIONS ON THE ADMINISTRATION WERE

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 TUNIS 03980 100916Z

AGAIN EMPHASIZED.)

7. THE MINISTER EXPLAINED THAT GOT WOULD SOON INCREASE THE MOD SHARE OF THE NATIONAL BUDGET TO 10 PERCENT ALTHOUGH THIS WAS NOT THE CASE THIS YEAR. OWING TO ITS INCREASING RESPONSIBILITIES, THE NAVY HAS A HIGH PRIORITY FOR NAVAL EQUIPMENT BUT HE REALIZED THAT THE NEEDS OF THE OTHER SERVICES MUST BE ACCOMMODATED. HE INDICATED AN

INTEREST IN FURTHER DISCUSSION OF THE A-4 AND IN PURSUING
SHIP OFFER BUT MADE NO FIRM COMMITMENTS ON EITHER.

8. THE MINISTER ADDED THAT IN ADDITION TO MATERIAL
ASSISTANCE MOD WAS UNDERTAKING A FEASIBILITY STUDY TOWARD
THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN ARMED SERVICES TECHNICAL SCHOOL.
THIS CONCEPT IS AN OUTGROWTH OF THEIR PREVIOUS AIR FORCE
TECHNICAL SCHOOL STUDY. A TRI-SERVICE SCHOOL SHOULD
FURNISH A BROADER AND CONTINUING STUDENT BASE PROVIDING
BETTER COST EFFECTIVENESS THAN THE ORIGINAL SINGLE SERVICE
CONCEPT. CHUSLOT OFFERED TO ASSIST IN STUDY, BUT
ADVISED MINISTER THAT LIMITED U.S. RESOURCES WOULD MAKE
ANY ASSISTANCE ON OUR PART CONTINGENT ON FUTURE AID LEVELS
AND ADJUSTMENT OF MOD PRIORITIES.

9. COMMENT: THIS MEETING DEFINITELY HELPED TO CLEAR THE
AIR. ON BALANCE FARHAT SEEMED PLEASED WITH OUR RESPONSE.
ALTHOUGH NO DEFINITE COMMITMENTS WERE MADE OR EXPECTED BY
EITHER SIDE, GOT NOW HAS A CLEAR IDEA OF FUTURE TREND OF
U.S. SECURITY ASSISTANCE. ONCE GOT HAS DIGESTED THIS
INFORMATION, USLOT WILL BE ABLE TO UNDERTAKE DETAILED
PLANNING IN FOLLOWUP MEETING WITH MOD STAFF. THE APPOINT-
MENT OF LTC BALMA TO MILITARY COUNSELOR TO THE MINISTER
INDICATED THAT COORDINATING AND ROUTINE DECISION MAKING
FUNCTIONS PREVIOUSLY DELEGATED TO FORMER SECRETARY GENERAL
BALY WILL BE ASSUMED JOINTLY BY BALMA AND CHEF DE CABINET
KAROUI.

10. IN ORDER TO PERMIT FOLLOWUP ON OUR PART FOLLOWING
ACTION REQUESTED:

A. FORMAL OFFER OF DER TO INCLUDE DETAILED COST
BREAKDOWN, ESTIMATE OF CONTINUED MAINTENANCE SUPPORT,
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SECRET

PAGE 04 TUNIS 03980 100916Z

AND DATE OF DELIVERY.

B. A FIRM DECISION ON AVAILABILITY OF A-4 FOR OTHER
SUITABLE AIRCRAFT. (FYI BASED ON TAF PLAN TO PHASE OUT
F-86 IN CY 75, TIME FRAME FOR DESIRED DELIVERY APPEARS
TO BE FY 76.)

C. ASSISTANCE IN PRESENTATION OF TECHNICAL BRIEFING
SOONEST ON A-4C WHICH WILL INCLUDE PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS,
TRAINING, MAINTENANCE AND GROUND SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS.
MACDONALD-DOUGLAS REPRESENTATIVES OR QUALIFIED DOD PERSONNEL
SHOULD MAKE THIS PRESENTATION.

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